

**CELEBRATING NEW POSSIBILITIES ON THE HORIZON WITH THE 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
HOPE AND RECOVERY CONFERENCE**  
By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director



Over 400 clients, providers and community members attended the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Hope and Recovery Conference on Tuesday, April 29, 2014, at the Almansor Court Banquet Facility in Alhambra. The conference is planned by consumers, for consumers, to reinforce the importance that hope plays in wellness and to demonstrate that recovery is possible for everyone.

Catherine Clay, advocate and peer Health Navigator, served as Mistress of Ceremonies and welcomed the crowd. Hector Ramirez, Public Policy Analyst and Disability Rights Advocate, served as Master of Ceremonies and gave opening remarks.



The first Keynote Speaker was Jacques Alexander, Peer Counselor, Life Coach and Motivational Speaker, who told his inspirational story and talked about the program that helped him, Straight Talk On Peer Pressure (S.T.O.P.P.).

Ms. Clay then got the crowd moving by leading everyone in the Cupid Shuffle.



The next Keynote speaker was Reba Stevens, who works with LACDMH's Older Adult System of Care pilot program, Transition Care. Reba moved the audience by talking about her personal road to recovery, including: growing up as a child that is "seen and not heard," living in a family with an absent father, surviving the death of a sister, addiction and incarceration. Reba's passionate message was that of survival. She urged all to create a stable foundation that will support them through both good and bad times. Reba's talk resonated with the audience; they gave her a standing ovation.

Deputy Director Cathy Warner, L.C.S.W., LACDMH Adult System of Care, concluded the morning session by focusing on the changes in the healthcare system and the projected growth of LACDMH ASOC programs in the next three years with the hiring of approximately 124 new peer positions, expanding existing wellness and client-run centers and adding two new client-run centers.

The rest of the day's activities included lunch, raffles, a cultural performance by the Mary Lind Foundation, various workshops, and a talk on Mindfulness.

